
NEWS RELEASE

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March 15, 2007

Ministry of Education

DISTRICTS GET MORE FUNDING WHILE ENROLMENT DECLINES

VICTORIA – B.C. school districts will receive a \$116-million increase next year while enrolment is projected to continue to decline, Education Minister Shirley Bond announced today.

“This increase is on top of the \$470-million increase boards received this year,” said Bond. “This record amount of funding means that no school district will receive less funding next year, even though almost all districts expect to have fewer students.”

The additional \$116 million boosts school district operating funding to \$4.345 billion for the 2007-08 school year – the highest ever. The increase includes \$20 million in additional operating funding. The Province is also fully funding the negotiated agreements reached last year with employees in the K-12 education sector and fully funding increased pension costs.

“At the same time, districts forecast they will have 7,574 fewer students next year,” said Bond. “As a result, the average per pupil grant is expected to increase \$336, from \$7,596 to an estimated \$7,932. Since 2000-01, the per pupil grant has increased by \$1,716.”

Last year, districts estimated they would have about 7,000 fewer students but when enrolment counts were finalized in September there were in fact 12,300 fewer students. This is the seventh year in a row the per pupil grant has increased.

School districts project they will have 547,840 full-time students in 2007-08 compared to 555,414 this year. Fifty-six of the 60 school districts project they will have fewer students next year. Since 2000-01, enrolment has declined by over 50,000 students and is expected to decrease another 25,000 over the next five years.

School districts with an enrolment decrease greater than one per cent in a year receive extra funds from the Province. The Province also provides additional funds to help districts with a decrease in enrolment of four per cent or more, and districts with a decrease of seven per cent or more over three years. This year, 45 districts are expected to receive almost \$16 million to help with declining enrolment.

Next year, school districts will also receive increased funding for English as a Second Language (ESL) students and Aboriginal students. Funding for ESL students will increase by an estimated \$3.8 million while funding for Aboriginal students will increase by an estimated \$3 million. Funding for small and rural schools will increase by an estimated \$6.5 million.

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"Every year a technical review committee made up of representatives from school districts examines the funding formula and makes recommendations to improve it," said Bond. "The committee recommended increasing funding for Aboriginal and ESL students, and for students in rural schools – and we've acted on those recommendations."

The Province will also double the funding for the Summer Learning program from \$2 million to \$4 million. Summer Learning allows students to take courses during the summer free of charge.

The government is working to make B.C. the best-educated, most literate jurisdiction on the continent. Since 2000-01, the Province has increased funding to B.C. public schools by over \$1 billion: \$667 million in operating grants and \$407 million in one-time grants. During the same period, enrolment has declined by over 50,000 students.

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1 backgrounder(s) attached. 1 factsheet(s) attached.

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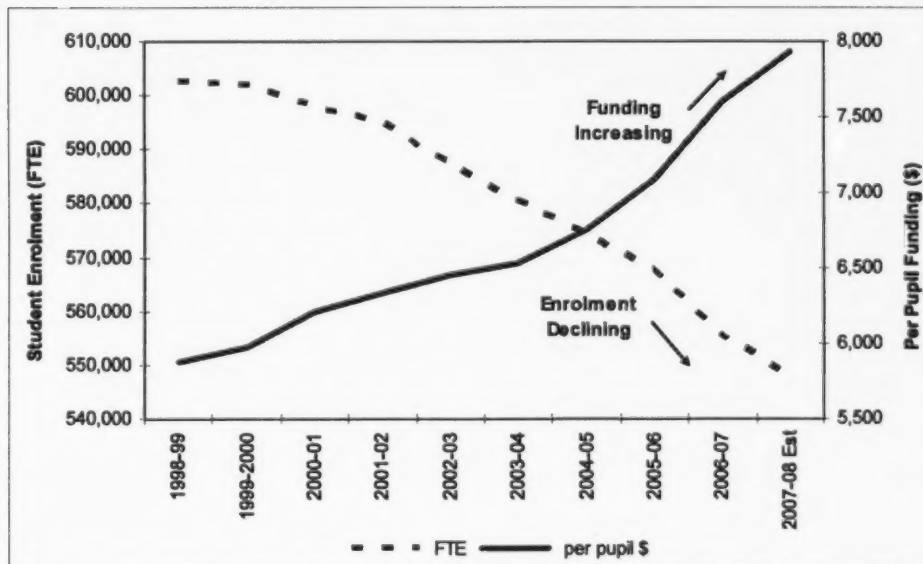


BACKGROUND

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FUNDING CONTINUES TO CLIMB DESPITE FALLING ENROLMENT



Year	Operating funding	FTE students	Per student funding
2000-01	\$3.72 billion	597,948	\$6,216
2001-02	\$3.77 billion	595,157	\$6,328
2002-03	\$3.79 billion	587,247	\$6,455
2003-04	\$3.79 billion	580,484	\$6,529
2004-05	\$3.88 billion	574,230	\$6,752
2005-06	\$4.03 billion	567,823	\$7,093
2006-07	\$4.23 billion	555,414	\$7,596
2007-08	\$4.35 billion	547,840 est.	\$7,912 est.

- Enrolment is expected to increase significantly in only two school districts next year: Conseil scolaire francophone (CSF) and Surrey. CSF expects to increase by 228 FTE students, while Surrey projects an increase of 855 FTE students.
- Vancouver forecasts the largest drop with 990 fewer students. At the same time, the Vancouver school district will receive an additional \$12.4 million

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- The next five largest forecasted enrolment declines are Coquitlam with 544 fewer students, followed by North Vancouver with 506, Greater Victoria with 487, Kamloops/Thompson with 411 and Central Okanagan with 349.
- Despite those significant drops in enrolment, all of the above districts will receive a funding increase: Coquitlam \$6.6 million, North Vancouver \$1.7 million, Greater Victoria \$2.8 million, Kamloops/Thompson \$1.4 million and Central Okanagan \$4.6 million.
- Additional funding for English as a Second Language (ESL) students will increase \$74 per pupil from \$1,100 to \$1,174 for a total increase of \$3.8 million. Total ESL funding will increase from \$63.5 million in 2006-07 to an estimated \$67.3 million in 2007-08.
- Additional funding for Aboriginal students will increase \$64 per pupil from \$950 to \$1,014 for a total increase of \$3 million. Total Aboriginal funding will increase from \$48.1 million in 2006-07 to an estimated \$51.1 million in 2007-08.
- The annual operating funding will also provide districts with \$41.4 million to harmonize teacher salaries across B.C. Salary harmonization was part of facilitator Vince Ready's recommendations in a 2005 report.
- Since 2000-01, the average per pupil grant has increased by \$1,716 to an estimated \$7,932. That's an increase of nearly 28 per cent.

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FACTSHEET

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ESTIMATED SCHOOL DISTRICT OPERATING GRANTS 2007-08

School district	Est. Grant 2007-08 (\$)	Final Grant 2006-07 (\$)	Est. FTEs* 2007-08	Final FTEs* 2006-07
5 Southeast Kootenay	47,498,811	46,707,259	5,329.5000	5,539.8750
6 Rocky Mountain	30,224,121	30,224,121	3,165.8750	3,342.8750
8 Kootenay Lake	47,411,054	47,411,054	4,933.7148	5,093.1875
10 Arrow Lakes	6,975,090	6,866,742	596.9870	604.2500
19 Revelstoke	9,905,181	9,901,132	1,129.3750	1,168.3750
20 Kootenay-Columbia	35,673,038	35,516,961	4,284.1250	4,397.1250
22 Vernon	68,753,257	66,296,344	8,794.5000	8,815.9375
23 Central Okanagan	155,754,640	151,109,144	20,831.6973	21,181.0625
27 Cariboo-Chilcotin	53,504,739	53,156,555	5,854.0000	6,070.5000
28 Quesnel	34,790,115	34,078,233	3,978.0000	4,092.7186
33 Chilliwack	90,990,487	88,526,720	12,048.0000	12,165.7813
34 Abbotsford	135,855,704	132,178,128	18,300.0000	18,471.5417
35 Langley	135,364,519	130,780,624	18,336.1250	18,514.4375
36 Surrey	477,337,957	450,264,219	64,530.6942	63,675.3050
37 Delta	119,361,139	116,014,230	15,932.0000	16,037.8719
38 Richmond	163,717,235	157,580,752	22,010.0000	22,255.2786
39 Vancouver	421,770,238	409,390,735	55,042.7700	56,033.0780
40 New Westminster	50,460,114	47,916,158	6,642.0000	6,643.0806
41 Burnaby	173,468,150	166,776,299	23,582.8791	23,770.0666
42 Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows	106,719,063	103,423,260	14,161.0000	14,454.4208
43 Coquitlam	216,141,376	209,508,124	29,491.0000	30,035.1935
44 North Vancouver	119,699,904	117,992,155	15,956.1407	16,462.3558
45 West Vancouver	44,456,185	42,120,766	6,076.0000	6,064.5000
46 Sunshine Coast	33,202,754	32,656,676	3,535.0000	3,660.2500
47 Powell River	21,252,842	21,055,262	2,394.7416	2,462.5625
48 Howe Sound	33,107,477	32,067,815	4,031.5000	4,117.3750
49 Central Coast	4,959,373	4,753,218	272.3750	276.6250
50 Haida Gwaii/Q. Charlotte	9,389,835	9,255,991	743.2500	754.5000
51 Boundary	15,616,611	15,616,611	1,531.1250	1,575.6250
52 Prince Rupert	25,297,003	25,209,564	2,540.0000	2,595.9375
53 Okanagan Similkameen	24,043,713	23,454,787	2,732.5000	2,817.5625
54 Bulkley Valley	22,478,087	21,799,838	2,517.0000	2,533.3125
57 Prince George	121,071,696	118,840,649	14,908.1250	15,016.8126
58 Nicola-Similkameen	24,234,384	24,234,384	2,465.0000	2,538.6250
59 Peace River South	41,394,829	40,069,667	4,322.7000	4,407.0000
60 Peace River North	50,031,368	47,835,471	5,636.6875	5,623.4375

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School district	Est. Grant 2007-08 (\$)	Final Grant 2006-07 (\$)	Est. FTEs* 2007-08	Final FTEs* 2006-07
61 Greater Victoria	142,022,780	139,265,232	18,834.1000	19,320.9089
62 Sooke	66,839,123	64,848,217	8,374.0984	8,442.7500
63 Saanich	61,209,740	61,209,740	7,565.5125	7,819.3800
64 Gulf Islands	14,821,313	14,501,517	1,484.0000	1,526.0000
67 Okanagan Skaha	54,028,303	52,599,235	6,749.8750	6,899.8125
68 Nanaimo-Ladysmith	111,803,811	108,745,276	14,355.0000	14,562.1375
69 Qualicum	39,993,734	38,878,144	4,789.0000	4,853.0000
70 Alberni	36,655,594	36,311,784	4,240.7900	4,351.6250
71 Comox Valley	68,828,914	67,786,783	8,520.0000	8,675.5000
72 Campbell River	49,584,823	48,152,219	5,811.9375	5,927.1875
73 Kamloops/Thompson	114,216,887	112,787,360	14,095.0000	14,506.2750
74 Gold Trail	20,258,184	20,258,184	1,515.0000	1,650.1250
75 Mission	52,769,379	50,744,932	6,819.5000	6,846.7500
78 Fraser-Cascade	18,842,049	18,715,770	2,061.1250	2,081.3750
79 Cowichan Valley	69,390,674	68,717,459	8,737.5000	9,054.4377
81 Fort Nelson	9,390,448	9,390,448	975.6250	998.1250
82 Coast Mountains	50,124,485	49,635,285	5,318.8125	5,503.5000
83 North Okanagan-Shuswap	60,703,210	59,109,645	7,169.0000	7,299.2500
84 Vancouver Island West	6,245,080	6,126,828	438.5000	440.7500
85 Vancouver Island North	18,299,516	18,299,516	1,641.0000	1,676.9904
87 Stikine	5,565,871	5,470,259	266.0000	270.5000
91 Nechako Lakes	46,492,505	46,261,495	5,029.0000	5,244.6875
92 Nisga'a	6,428,518	6,295,586	440.0000	449.0000
93 Conseil scolaire francophone	48,784,439	44,490,505	3,973.0000	3,745.5000
Provincial totals:	4,345,211,469	4,219,191,067	547,839.7631	555,414.0095

*The number of full-time-equivalent students includes school-age and adult learners.

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